in hotels and tea shops in some States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to stop growing attacks against SCs and STs by the upper caste Hindus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) Information is being collected from States/UTs.

(c) Ministry of Home Affairs in their Circular letter No. 24013/47/98-GPA. VI, dated 12.11.98 addressed to Chief Secretaries of the States/UT Administration have reiterated their advice to give more focussed attention for improving administration of criminal justice system to ensure prevention of atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Welfare measures for destitute women of Vrindaban

61. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of widows who have been deserted and left in Vrindaban by their relatives;

(b) whether Government propose to give them a subsistence allowance; and

(c) if so, how long will it take initate welfare measures for these destitute women suffering for a long time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) There is no definite information available with the Government about the number of widows living in Vrindaban. However, the reports made by the National Commission for Women and the Uttar Pradesh State Social Welfare Board show that their number ranges from 6000 to 20,000.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The following welfare measures have been taken by the Central and State Government for the Welfare of Widows in Vrindaban.

(i) The Central Government has set up a Committee under the

Chairmanship of Minister of State for Women and Child Development to Coordinate the efforts of State Government of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and Central Government Organisations for rehabilitation of the marginalised women of Vrindaban to monitor flow of benefits of Central Schemes to the target group to recommend a Plan of Action and implementation schedule for their rehabilitation, etc.

(ii) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has set up District Level Committee Under the Chairmanship of the district Collector, Mathura to take necessary action for rehabilitation of the marginalised women of Vrindaban.

(iii) The Government of Uttar Pradesh has also appointed an officer of the rank of Additional Collector to oversee the Programmes declared by the District and Central level Committees and ensure that these are implemented expeditiously.

(iv) An amount of Rs. 5.82 lakhs has been relased by the Central Government during 1998-99, to a Non-Government Organization, named, Guild of Service, for rehabilitation of widows of Vrindaban, under the scheme fo General Grant-in-aid Programme for Assistance in the Field of Social Defence.

(v) A number of widows have been housed in Pagal Baba Ashram and steps have been taken to impart vocational training to a few of them.

(vi) A Women's Cell, staffed by lady police, has become operational in the local police station of Vrindaban.

(vii) The West Bengal Women Commission has decided to undertake a door-to-door survey of widows of West Bengal living in Vrindaban.

Grants to Charitable Trusts

62. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the main schemes available with her Ministry for giving grants to Charitable Trusts and names of the trusts who are running social welfare programmes;